

## Claims

1. Distribution device for distributing short messages to an IP-compatible terminal, with  
a receiving apparatus, which receives short messages for  
5 subscribers,  
an interrogation device which, after the arrival of a short message for a subscriber, asks a registration device for registering a subscriber whether the subscriber is "online",  
a control device, which evaluates the interrogation result and  
10 forwards a short message to the subscriber or buffers the message, depending on the result of the evaluation.
2. Distribution device as claimed in claim 1,  
characterized in that  
it forwards the short message to the subscriber over the IP  
15 network if said interrogation reveals that the subscriber is online.
3. Distribution device as claimed in claim 1,  
characterized in that  
it buffers the short message for the subscriber if said  
20 interrogation reveals that the subscriber is not online and has no access to the circuit switched network,  
it submits a new request to the registration device at regular intervals and forwards the short message to the subscriber as soon as a new request reveals that the subscriber is now  
25 online.
4. Distribution device as claimed in claim 1,  
characterized in that,  
it forwards the short message to the subscriber via the circuit  
switched network if said interrogation reveals that the  
30 subscriber is not online.

5. Registration device which registers the status of their network access in relation to a subscriber, characterized in that, it features an interface to a distribution device for  
5 distribution of short messages to an IP-compatible terminal, via which it responds to the request of the distribution device for the status of the network access of the subscriber.